



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
Office of the Comptroller
Business Management Group

National Parks Business Plan Internship

Overview

National Park Business Plan and Consulting Interns (summer consultants) promote the long-term health of our national parks by developing and improving financial planning and management tools at the park or program level.

Up to 15 summer consultants are selected from top graduate schools of business, public policy, environmental management, and related fields to work as two- or three-person teams at national parks across the country. The parks participating in summer 2011 will be announced in February 2011.

Job Description

We are looking for students currently enrolled in graduate programs of business, public policy, environmental management, public administration, and related fields who want to help improve the financial and operational health of their national parks.

The 11-week internship program runs June through August and begins with a week-long orientation training in a national park, followed by 10 weeks at the student's park assignment. In 2011, the program will begin on Saturday, June 4 and end on Friday, August 19.

Over the course of the internship, each summer consultant team works closely with park or program management to conduct financial and strategy analyses. Tasks may include:

- Working with park staff to evaluate park programs and operations.
- Facilitating discussions to determine strategic park or program priorities.
- Analyzing current resource allocations in the context of near-term park priorities.
- Developing financial and management strategies to accomplish park goals. Examples include identifying and evaluating partnership opportunities with local nonprofits, developing strategies to increase the park's budgetary or in-kind resources (e.g., increase donations, expand volunteer recruitment, secure grant or project funding), reducing park operating costs, and creating marketing strategies for a park or specific program (e.g., a park's educational programs).
- Projecting staffing and financial requirements to support park priorities.
- Performing specialty analyses to improve park operations. Examples include determining the most efficient fleet structure, developing a cost-benefit analysis for use of volunteers, conducting a life-cycle costing exercise for different types of equipment, optimizing revenue from fee operations and evaluating bookstore operations.

At the end of the program, the summer consultant teams present their findings to park management. Teams often develop a business plan or formal report (e.g., marketing plan,

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commercial services strategy) to present project findings to the public, although some teams produce deliverables for internal management use only.

Each summer consultant team reports directly to his or her park's senior management, with project management and supervision provided by NPS staff in Washington, DC. Both first and second-year graduate students are encouraged to apply.

Required Qualifications

- US citizen or permanent resident
- At least two years of professional work experience
- Excellent time management/project management and analytical skills
- Superb oral and written communication skills, including presentation skills
- Flexible work style and ability to work in a team
- Understanding of and commitment to the mission of the National Park Service
- Availability for all program dates (June 4 – August 19, 2011)
- A valid US driver's license
- Consulting, government or nonprofit experience preferred

Compensation

Summer consultants receive a weekly stipend of \$725. The program covers transportation to the BPI orientation training at the start of the program, to the park assignment, and from the park to the consultant's school at the end of the summer. Summer consultants are also reimbursed for any other work-related travel.

Each park provides housing and office space. Utility costs are typically included. A vehicle for local use is also provided for the team to share.

Application Process

Applications and questions should be e-mailed to: nps_bp_help@nps.gov

Your application must include the following:

- Cover letter
- Resume
- Writing sample
- Names and contact information for at least two references

Writing samples should be two to five pages and may be from any area of work. Applicant must be the primary author of the document. Writing samples have included graduate admissions essays, policy memos, and case studies.

Please be aware that references may be contacted after interviews without prior notification from the NPS Business Management Group. Please inform your references that they may be contacted after the interview.

Applications will be accepted through the close of business on January 14, 2011. Applying early is recommended. We will not consider incomplete applications, and we will acknowledge receiving your application.

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Applicants will be notified regarding the status of their application the week of January 24, 2011. The National Park Service will conduct interviews at universities across the country beginning in early February. We will conduct phone interviews with applicants who are unable to interview in person.

Positions are offered on a rolling basis. Project assignments will not be made until all employment offers have been accepted. Project assignments will be based on summer consultants' relevant experience and unique park or project needs, making every effort to accommodate developmental goals and personal preferences.

For additional information, please see <http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/consultinginternship.htm>.